WHITE AND BLACK IN AFRICA

A Critical Examination of the Rhodes Lectures of General Smuts

By

J. H. OLDHAM

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TO

THE MEMORY OF

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PREFACE

General Smuts in the lectures given during his recent visit to England has aroused fresh public interest in the continent of Africa. I have been moved to write this little book, partly because it seemed desirable to take advantage of the newly awakened interest to continue the discussion of the far-reaching issues raised in the lectures, and partly because on certain questions of fundamental importance I find myself in acute disagreement with General Smuts, and am unwilling that his assertions should pass unchallenged. Notwithstanding these differences, there is much that he said in his lectures with which I am in hearty accord. In particular, when he gets away from what seem to me to be the trammels of his South African experience and surveys with fresh eyes the problems of international relations and of modern democracy, he propounds ideas which are full of stimulus and suggestion in their bearing on the problems created by the contact between the white and black races in Africa.

I have not waited for the publication of General Smuts' lectures in book form, because if this book has anything to contribute to the discussion it seemed best that it should appear while the subject is fresh in the public mind. The lectures were reported fully in the Press, and my comments are based on these reports. If at any point I have misunderstood General Smuts in consequence of the incompleteness of the published report, I

must express my regret; if a further edition of this book should be called for, any necessary corrections will be made.

A number of friends, whose knowledge is much greater, and whose experience is wider and riper, than my own, have been good enough to read a first draft of the book and to give me most helpful advice, suggestion and criticism. I refrain from mentioning their names, because I do not wish to seem to implicate them in the expression of opinions with which they may not wholly agree. But without their help the book could not have been what it is.

J. H. Oldham.

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WHITE AND BLACK IN AFRICA

CHAPTER I

THE MEANING OF AFRICA

In visiting Great Britain and delivering the Rhodes Lectures General Smuts has added another to the many public services of a distinguished career. He has made people think about Africa. His prestige, his gifts of imagination and his eloquence have aroused the public mind afresh, as no one else could have done, to the importance of that continent.

One-third of Africa forms part of the British Empire. Of that third an area considerably larger than India and Burma, or than the whole of Europe apart from Russia, belongs to the colonial empire for the administration of which the British Parliament is directly responsible. No absorption in domestic affairs can justify indifference to imperial interests and responsibilities of such magnitude.

It is not, of course, Great Britain alone that is concerned with Africa. While nearly four million square miles of the continent form part of the British Empire, an even larger part is under the rule of France. Belgium is responsible for the government of a territory comprising nearly a million square miles. Portugal and

Italy each control about three-quarters of a million. The remaining nine hundred thousand square miles belong to Egypt, Abyssinia, Spain and Liberia. But it is not merely the nations which are jointly responsible for the administration of Africa that have an interest in it. The sudden emergence of a continent is an event of the utmost importance for mankind as a whole.

Men still alive can recall the time when only one-tenth of the continent was in effective European occupation. Half a century ago Africa, except for its fringes, lay outside the stream of the world's life. Its resources were undeveloped; it was contributing almost nothing to the wealth of the world. It is a fact of staggering importance that within the lifetime of a generation a continent has been added to the sources of supply of food-stuffs and of the raw materials that are needed by modern industry.

Exaggerated estimates must be avoided. A distinguished American agriculturist has reckoned that in East Africa alone, from Abyssinia to Southern Rhodesia, the amount of land suitable for crops is equal to the cultivable land in the United States. But how much of this will actually be cultivated in the next few generations will depend on the nature of the crops for which the land is suited, the extent of the world's demand for them, and many other factors. The continent is also rich—no one can yet say how rich—in minerals. South Africa is unique in its possession of gold and diamonds; but the mines have already reached about the middle of their probable life. There are immense copper deposits in the Belgian Congo and still greater, it is believed, in Northern Rhodesia; but it will be some time before both together exceed the output of Chile, and it is unlikely that they will ever equal that of the United States. Nevertheless, however sober may be our estimates in regard to the future, the growth of the

exports from the continent of Africa during the past half-century is sufficiently eloquent. Fifty years ago the annual value of the exports from Africa was less than £30,000,000; if Egypt and Algeria are excluded, it was less than £7,000,000. Twenty-five years ago the total amount had risen to £76,000,000. To-day it exceeds £260,000,000.

Yet the chief significance of Africa does not lie in the food-stuffs and raw materials with which it can supply the world. Its human inhabitants are more important than its minerals or its crops. It is by their agency that the latent wealth of the continent can be made available for the good of mankind. Even in the temperate climate of South Africa their labour provides the foundation of the economic structure; in tropical Africa no enterprise can succeed without them. They are not only indispensable to production; they are also a great potential market. As their wants multiply and their standard of living rises, they will become increasingly the purchasers of the products of the industry of other lands.

If the resources of this new continent are to be developed, the first essential is the physical, intellectual and social advancement of its peoples. Their too scanty numbers must be increased. Their physique must be improved. Their intelligence must be raised. And since they are human beings and not machines, they must be given an adequate incentive and hope of reward. The necessity of educating the common man is an accepted principle of modern States. Progress consists in the increasing skill and capacity of individual workers, and economists recognize that "freedom and hope increase not only man's willingness, but also his power for work." On economic grounds alone the education of the peoples of Africa is the most urgent task to be undertaken by the European rulers of the continent.

But economic interests are only part of the meaning of life. The peoples of Africa have a value not merely as producers and consumers, but as human beings. General Smuts reminds us that they constitute "a distinct type which the world would be poorer without," and that we have in the African race "the vast results of time which we should conserve and develop with the same high respect which we feel towards all great natural facts."

At the heart of western civilization lies the faith that human beings are ends in themselves. They have a value apart from any purposes which they may be used to serve. There is something in every man which is unique and incomparable, and which should command our reverence. Progress has consisted in the continuous widening of the field of opportunity for individuals to make the best of what is in them. Reverence for life in the humblest and most backward members of the human family has underlain all that is great in the history of mankind.

This faith on which western civilization rests is threatened by the growing complexity and organization of modern life. Human purposes are limited and frustrated by the increasing sway of impersonal forces. Economic organization is in danger of crushing out human values. The great task which confronts us to-day is to create a world in which not things but persons are in control and to make the vast machine of modern economic organization subserve genuinely human ends.

The opening up of the continent of Africa exposes our ultimate beliefs to a crucial test. The meeting of the strong and the weak is a trial of the reality of our faith in the value of persons. As General Smuts said in his lecture on Livingstone, "the new situation will present difficult social and political problems which will tax the

statesmanship of this and the coming generation to the full. Africa will indeed apply the severest possible test to our European system with its ethical Christian ideals." The fundamental issue is whether the policy of Europe in regard to the native peoples of Africa is to be one of repression or of development. Will the dominant white race look on them primarily as instruments of its own economic advantage, or recognize that its duty and responsibility is to guide and assist them to the highest development of which they are capable?

Africa has become a major problem of the twentieth century. What is done, or is not done, in a vast continent cannot fail to have a profound effect on the economic, moral and spiritual life of the rest of mankind. To these issues General Smuts has compelled attention. He has done his utmost by his own enthusiasm and vision to arouse the public mind to their importance. He appealed in particular to the people of Great Britain to recognize and fulfil their immense responsibilities. A nation that is content to have a parochial mind has no claim to exercise the responsibilities of empire. Indifference, when the destinies of a continent are in the balance, is a dereliction of duty. General Smuts seeks to rouse us from our lethargy. He urges us to think. He lays us under an obligation to consider and to discuss the issues he has raised. He will expect, therefore, that what he says about Africa will be critically examined and both his facts and his conclusions subjected to careful scrutiny.

CHAPTER II

THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRECEDENT

The central idea of the first of the Rhodes Lectures is that the advance of Africa is possible only through the stimulus and support of the more advanced civilization of Europe. It is maintained, further, that it is not enough for that civilization to influence the peoples of Africa through the efforts of officials and missionaries whose presence in the continent is transient and cannot consequently make a sufficiently profound impression on the African. The higher civilization must establish itself in a more permanent form. "Without a large European population as a continuous support and guarantee of that civilization, and as an ever-present practical example and stimulus for the natives, the civilization will not go far and will not endure for long." White settlement under proper safeguards is the most effective means of promoting native progress.

In support of this thesis attention is called to the example of South Africa. "The part of Africa," we are told, "in which the native population has been increasing most rapidly within the last fifty years is the Union of South Africa, and that fact is a great tribute to the favourable economic conditions which have rendered such an expansion possible, and to the medical care taken and welfare work carried on among the natives. It is certainly a very significant fact that in that part of Africa where a great white community exists alongside the natives, they have shown the greatest economic progress,

the largest increase and the greatest advance in education and civilization."

General Smuts must have assumed that his Oxford audience knew very little about conditions in South Africa. Otherwise he would have thought it necessary to furnish some evidence in support of assertions that are so little borne out by the facts. It is necessary to examine the position and prospects of the native population in South Africa in order to see how far the contention is justified that "even if it is granted in principle that native interests should rank first, still white settlement, under proper safeguards, remains the best means to give effect to that priority."

It is possible to undertake such an examination of the facts without attempting to pass judgment on white South Africa. A long history has gone to the making of the present situation, and it explains much. In the difficult relations between the races, the problems of the white race call for sympathetic understanding as well as those of the black. The former are the trustees of a higher civilization. They are engaged in a life-and-death struggle to keep the institutions, achievements and ideals of European civilization from being submerged in the less progressive life around them. It needs little imagination to enter into the feelings of white wage-earners, whose standards of life are menaced by the competition of cheaper labour. It must not be forgotten that South Africa is a new country. It is only awakening to its problems, and judgment on its still unfinished history must remain in suspense. It would, moreover, be an untrue and unfair judgment of South Africa which took into account only the disabilities to which the native population is subject and overlooked the white South Africans who, in public office and as private citizens, have striven in the past, and are striving to-day, to lessen those disabilities. Nothing will be said here that has

not been said repeatedly by South Africans who are doing their utmost to improve the conditions which now exist.

It is maintained by General Smuts, in the first place, that the natives have increased more rapidly in the last fifty years in South Africa than elsewhere in the continent. While the statement may be true, it does not rest on any foundation of ascertained fact, since no trustworthy data exist in regard to the increase or decrease of population in different parts of Africa. Moreover, the causes affecting the growth of population are so various, complex and obscure that a general statement of this kind has little significance. Nor is there much illumination in a comparison between territories in which there has been a settled government for a considerable period and those which have more recently come under European occupation. The rapid opening up of tropical Africa in the last half-century led to the introduction of new diseases into hitherto untouched areas with devastating consequences. Ill-considered and overhasty methods of exploitation in some instances have caused an appalling loss of life. These conditions are, however, being brought increasingly under control by the various administrations. That a settled government, capable of providing effective medical services, can exist apart from white settlement, is shown by the examples of the Belgian Congo and Uganda, where more is being done for the improvement of the health of the native population than in South Africa.

In regard to conditions in South Africa, Dr. A. W. Roberts, of the Native Affairs Commission, in the most careful study of the population question that has yet been attempted, reaches the conclusion that there has been a steady decline in the rate of increase among both the European and the native population, but that the decline has been much more serious among the latter.

With reference to the statistics for Cape Colony he remarks that "if we were not dealing with cold unresponsive figures, we would be tempted to inquire more urgently if there were no way out of this shadow of death." [1] Whatever increase of the native population there may have been in South Africa cannot be attributed primarily to the cause assigned by General Smuts, namely, the medical and welfare work carried on among the natives. While there are native hospitals in the large centres and European doctors to whom natives can go for treatment, the number of the latter is quite insufficient for the needs of the native population. It is only now, owing mainly to the enthusiasm of Dr. C. T. Loram, a member of the Native Affairs Commission, that plans are under consideration for the training of natives as doctors, health assistants, nurses and midwives, to assist in promoting the health of their own people. In the recent Report of a Commission on this subject, presented to the South African Parliament, it is stated that "as yet, in comparison with the work of colonial administrations in other parts of Africa, little has been done in the Union to organize adequate and efficient medical services among the native population." [2]

Again, it is claimed that the natives in South Africa have advanced further in education and civilization than elsewhere in the continent. It is true that a considerable proportion of the natives of South Africa have been under educational influences for a longer time than in other parts of Africa. Missions have been at work in Cape Colony for a full century. Lovedale was started as a seminary of higher learning as long ago as 1841. There are now in South Africa natives who have not only themselves received education from European

[1] *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa*, vol. xiii, Part 3, pp. 234, 244.

[2] U.G. 35, 1928, p. 4.

teachers, but whose fathers and grandfathers have had such education. To have been born into an educated home is in itself a great educational advantage.

But let it be noted that all the education which the natives of South Africa have received, they have had from the missionaries. When Dr. Loram published his survey of native education in 1917, all but three of the several thousands of native schools were conducted by missionary agencies.[1] These efforts have been re-enforced by steadily increasing grants-in-aid from state funds, and by the direction and supervision of provincial departments of education. An enlightened policy in Cape Colony has resulted in a relatively liberal expenditure on native education, and the administration of native education in Natal was recognized by the Phelps Stokes Commission to be the most effective, best organized and best adapted to the real needs of the native peoples that they had seen in Africa. There has been a steady increase in the public funds devoted to native education, and the total expenditure in the Union under this head is now £570,000 per annum, which is about half of the total amount contributed by the natives in direct taxation.

The facts do not support General Smuts' argument. He draws a sharp distinction between the different forms in which European civilization is present in Africa. He regards the influence of missionaries and officials as relatively ineffective. "Neither separately nor together are they competent to play the decisive part which must be assigned to white settlement." The latter, partly because its roots are more deeply fixed in the soil, and partly because it provides the discipline of work, is a force that contributes more powerfully to the advancement of the natives. He then cites South Africa, where white settlement has taken place, as evidence of the

[1] Loram, *The Education of the South African Native*, p. 6.

educational progress of the natives under its influence. But what educational advance there has been in South Africa has been due entirely to the devotion of the missionaries, the keenness of officials and the enthusiasm of the natives themselves. Outside these classes white settlement has done nothing to further native education, except to sanction the expenditure of part of the native tax for this purpose. In the Transvaal and the Orange Free State it has been reluctant to do even this, and the expenditure in the latter province on native education has been almost negligible.

As it is, only twenty-five per cent. of the native children of school age are receiving any education. The proportion is higher in Uganda, and much higher in Nyasaland. Eighty-eight per cent. of the native population in South Africa are still illiterate. There is no educational institution in South Africa that either in expenditure or in the strength of its European staff is comparable to the Prince of Wales' College at Achimota in the Gold Coast. The educated natives of South Africa have had their outlook enlarged and their experience enriched by contact with the ideas and institutions of the white civilization in their midst, but the education which enables them to profit by this contact has come to them entirely through those agencies of European civilization which are independent of white settlement.

General Smuts maintains that "the easiest, most natural and obvious way to civilize the African native is to give him decent white employment. White employment is his best school; the gospel of labour is the most salutary gospel for him." That a native may learn much in the service of a good European master is undoubted. Booker Washington, who was a singularly apt and quick pupil, looked back in after life to the lessons he had learned from a white woman in whose house he found employment, as part of the most valuable

education he had received. But it is contrary to experience and to the facts of life in South Africa to suppose that white employment, apart from a definite educational purpose, is in itself an educative influence. The conditions of the 1,600,000 natives who are living outside the reserves as tenants, squatters and servants on white farms lend little support to this view. In the words of an unprejudiced South African witness, " the native squatter is the most backward of all his kind, divorced from his tribal life, untouched by civilizing influences." [1] It is not among the labourers on farms, nor among the workers in the mines, where the greatest care is given to physical welfare, but where moral conditions have little regard paid to them, that General Smuts will find the desired evidence of the educational progress of the natives.

The third claim put forward is that white settlement results in the more rapid economic progress of the natives. This assertion may be tested by the economic conditions, first, of the natives in the reserves, secondly, of the natives on farms, and, thirdly, of natives in industry.

In connection with the reserves, the crucial decision is the Land Act of 1913. The principle underlying this measure was that of territorial segregation. Natives and Europeans alike were prohibited from acquiring land in areas assigned to the other. The aim was that the two races should be able to develop their own life and institutions as far as possible in geographically separate areas. The aim may have much to commend it. The insuperable obstacle in the way of its attainment is the inequality of the present distribution of land. The existing native reserves scheduled in the Act of 1913 comprise only a little over seven per cent. of the land in the Union. It was recognized at the time that this was wholly

[1] S. G. Millin, *The South Africans*, p. 260.

inadequate, and a commission, known as the Beaumont Commission, was appointed to mark out additional lands. The Report recommended the setting aside of lands, the effect of which would be to allocate thirteen per cent. of the land for the 4,500,000 natives, leaving the remaining eighty-seven per cent. for the 1,500,000 Europeans and 700,000 other non-natives. The opposition to the proposals was so great that effect could not be given to them. A second attempt was made to provide additional land by the appointment of local committees, but it was found equally impossible to give legislative sanction to their recommendations. The Cape was exempted from the operation of the law by a decision of the courts, and in the other provinces the situation has been to some extent alleviated by administrative action. A third attempt to secure increased land for the natives has recently been made by General Hertzog. But this, likewise, encountered such difficulties that the measure has been withdrawn, and the situation remains unchanged. These failures are fatal to any thoroughgoing policy of segregation. It would be impossible to find room in the existing reserves for the 1,600,000 natives on farms, and the 300,000 detribalized natives who have drifted into the towns and become permanently domiciled there.

Conditions in the reserves were examined in a series of articles by Professor W. M. Macmillan in *The Cape Times*. He undertook a careful study of the Herschel district in Cape Colony. He reached the conclusion that the annual value of the produce exported from the district amounts to £1 per head of the population. This is the amount available to meet all expenses, apart from what is grown for home consumption, such as the cost of imported food, clothing, implements and taxes. These expenses for the districts he reckons to amount to about £80,000 a year. The value of the

exported produce is about £40,000. How is the deficit met? Only by the male population going out to labour. It is in fact only by seeking European employment that the district is kept from starvation.

These conditions Professor Macmillan believes to exist generally throughout the Union. Even in the Transkei, in some parts of which conditions are better, the able-bodied males spend on an average half their time outside the reserves. The conclusion reached by Professor Macmillan is that "the natives of the Union, as a whole, are a community dragging along at the very lowest level of base subsistence."[1] He adds that the evidence is conclusive that in the last ten years conditions have altered for the worse. This view is borne out by the statement submitted by Principal Henderson of Lovedale to the Select Committee on the recent Native Bills, regarding conditions in the Ciskei, which he has known intimately for twenty years. The situation described in the memorandum can best be summed up in a quotation from the report of an official who says: "I have no hesitation in saying that the natives of this district are not making any progress. They are steadily going back, and I should say that their economic condition as a people is deplorable. As a whole they are hopelessly in debt. Most of them must live in a state of semi-starvation."[2] There may have been an improvement of conditions in recent years in the Transkei, but it has been due entirely to earnings outside. The reserves in Zululand could doubtless carry a larger population, if less wasteful methods of cultivation were adopted. But, speaking generally, so far from the reserves being able to absorb more of the population, their present inhabitants must find work outside or starve.

[1] *The Cape Times*, April 20, 1926.

[2] *Report of the Select Committee on Native Bills*. S.C. 10, 1927. Appendix, pp. i–viii.

No one who takes the trouble to study the evidence of those who know native conditions at first-hand will imagine that the remedies proposed by General Smuts at Oxford, namely, the substitution of individual for communal tenure and the agricultural education of the natives, touch more than the fringe of the problem. There is little to be gained by improving the legal title to land when the real difficulty is that the holdings are inadequate. Agricultural training must be part of any general scheme for improvement, but it is only part. It does no good to the natives who cannot get land. In the Glen Grey district, where the number of allotments is 8,000, there is a waiting list of nearly 4,000. The situation is too complex to yield to any simple automatic device such as the extension of individual tenure. It calls for careful study as a whole and treatment along a number of different lines. This is not something that the natives can undertake for themselves. It requires the best expert advice and large public expenditure, which no South African Government has shown itself willing to contemplate.

The economic conditions of the 1,600,000 natives resident on European farms are not dissimilar. "They live off the produce of the farms on which they work, but little more than live" is the conclusion of Professor Macmillan; "for the general level of farm wages is undoubtedly so low that it is highly doubtful if their consumption or general expenditure amounts to even the low level of £1 per family per month." [1]

The evidence of the witnesses who have been quoted may need correction in this or that particular. The facts can be fully established only by the adoption of the recommendation made by the Economic and Wage Commission (1925) that the Government should undertake a complete survey of the economic position of the

[1] *The Cape Times*, April 20, 1926.

native people. But in view of the conclusions arrived at by careful individual students it is impossible to take on trust the assertions of General Smuts regarding the economic progress of the natives in South Africa.

We turn to the position of the natives in industry. One of the facts which most impressed the Economic and Wage Commission (1925) was the striking difference between the highest and the lowest paid labour in the Union. "South African rates of money wages are much higher than rates in any European country. They are considerably higher in most cases than in the largest Australian cities. . . . There is one exception: the wages of the South African labourer, who is usually non-European, are invariably lower than wages in other countries, approximating, however, in the higher South African wage centres, to those of a white labourer in Milan, Brussels or Berlin." [1] A white miner has a minimum wage of £1 a day; the average native miner earns about a £1 week. The author of the most recent history of South Africa sums up the situation disclosed in the report of the Economic and Wage Commission: "The Union's capacity to pay was that of crowded European countries like Italy; the actual wages paid to its Europeans was on the United States and Canadian scales. Between the two there was a great gulf fixed. It was bridged by underpaying the vast mass of the workers." [2] The natives in the mines are housed and fed in compounds, but the native worker in a factory or warehouse has to provide for himself and his family at a wage which will not usually exceed £5 or £6 a month, a quarter of which will go in rent. It is not difficult to picture the lot of detribalized natives living in urban centres, where the cost of living is high, compelled to

[1] Report, U.G. 14, 1926, pp. 187–8.
[2] Walker, *History of South Africa*, p. 574.

subsist on an inadequate wage, which must be kept low because to raise it would prevent the payment of the high wages insisted on by the white trade unions.

Nor are the natives, speaking generally, able to aspire to the more highly paid posts. The door to these is barred to them. General Smuts vigorously opposed the recent legislation empowering the Government to impose a colour bar in certain occupations. But such a colour bar already existed in regard to the mines in regulations under the Mines and Works Act of 1911, until the Supreme Court declared the regulations to be *ultra vires*, which led to pressure on the Government to re-institute the colour bar in a more comprehensive form; and apart from legislation there exists a conventional colour bar resulting from trades union regulations. The natives are in fact debarred from employment in most skilled occupations. They may acquire skill, but the exercise of it is denied to them. It is not so in other parts of Africa, where the native may aspire to any post that his ability qualifies him to fill. The contrast strikes the traveller when he crosses the frontier between Rhodesia and the Belgian Congo. He leaves a train in which the engine-driver, the guard and the principal officials are all white, and takes his place in one in which the staff is almost entirely black.

How in the light of these facts can it be maintained that white settlement as exemplified in South Africa makes for the economic advancement of the natives? The situation, as they view it, is one of despair. Except for the more fortunate few, there is only the barest subsistence to be obtained from the land. The third of the native population residing on European farms are in no better case. They are entirely without prospects. In industry only the unskilled and semi-skilled, and consequently poorly paid, occupations are open to the natives. What paths of progress are open to them?

They cannot all become teachers and preachers. The door of hope seems closed to the race. When their white friends talk with them, there is little in the South African situation to which they can point to afford encouragement. The only cheer that they can bring is to tell the natives of South Africa of the opportunities of progress which are being offered to their race in other parts of the continent.

General Smuts' view of the African as "the happiest human being" he has come across has in it an element of truth. One of the outstanding leaders among the American Negroes says of his race that whatever the Negro may hide in his heart he turns to the world a smiling face.[1] But this account of the African expresses only a partial truth. It conveys a wholly misleading impression of the state of mind of the natives of South Africa under existing conditions. It is irreconcilable with the disturbances which have occurred in various parts of the Union in recent years, and with the fact that the native population in Durban, where the great majority are still under tribal influences and are not politically minded, has been on the verge of revolution.

No brief account can give a complete or wholly fair view of the situation in South Africa. It is possible to bring into relief certain facts that are relevant to the argument without forgetting that there is a brighter side to the picture. Economic forces are often stronger than human intentions, and there are indications that notwithstanding the disabilities to which they are subject, the economic position of the natives in industry is steadily improving. It may be noted, however, that such improvement as has taken place has been due to capitalistic enterprise rather than to settlement. The agriculturalist has done little to advance the native economically. The capitalist employer has been the

[1] Moton, *What the Negro Thinks*, p. 116.

means of making tens of thousands of inefficient farm labourers into competent miners. There has been steady advance in native education. Far-reaching plans are under consideration for the improvement of native health. Much good may come from the Joint Councils in which Europeans and natives meet together to discuss the problems arising from the contact of the races. Most hopeful of all, perhaps, is the increasing interest which is being taken in native questions in South African universities. An increasing body of opinion is coming to see that it cannot be in the interests of South Africa that two-thirds of its population should remain ignorant and poor. The burden is too heavy for any state to carry. South Africa is wrestling with one of the most stupendous problems that has emerged in history. There are signs that the best minds in the country are awakening to its importance and setting themselves to find a real solution. All that has been attempted in this chapter is to contest the assertion of General Smuts that it has already, even in part, been reached.

Our object has been to see the facts as they are, not to offer criticism or apportion blame. No one can understand the great experiment in racial and cultural contacts which is being worked out in South Africa, who does not see, and sympathize with, both sides. The white race is fighting for the maintenance of its own culture and institutions and for the protection of its standards of life. But it is contending for more than this. It is the guardian of values that are essential to the welfare of the black race as well as to its own. The native will be in no way advantaged if the standards of civilization are lowered. A loss of efficiency will bring him no benefit. It is not for his ultimate good that government should become less competent, that order should be less effectively maintained, or that there should

be a drag on the wheels of progress. It is in his interest as well as in that of the dominant race that the conditions should be preserved which make his own progress possible. Whatever question there may be about the methods adopted for the defence of the higher civilization, the aim itself is indubitably right.

The native peoples have also a right on their side. It finds expression in the declaration of the President of the native National Congress that "the non-European races of the land demand a recognition of their rights as human beings." It is a claim for equal justice and equal opportunity. It is a demand that no barrier shall be interposed to their advance, and that they shall be given the chance to exercise the capacities that they have.

The situation in South Africa is not simply an opposition of right and wrong. It is a conflict of two "rights" with one another. The reconciliation of them is a task of immense difficulty.

In General Smuts' view "there is no inherent and inevitable clash of interests between whites and natives." Ideally this may be true. As things are, the clash of interests governs the whole situation. On the one hand we have the claim of the white race to conduct the affairs of the country primarily in its own interest. In its extreme form it finds expression in such language as the following: "The white man is determined to do all he can to remain and, what is more, to rule. This matter is to us in South Africa such a vital and fundamental matter that no ethical considerations, such as the rights of man, will be allowed to stand in the way." [1] On the other hand, there is the growing demand of the natives to be considered as ends in themselves, and to share in the benefits and privileges of the society of which they form a part. The two principles are in open

[1] Letter in *The Times*, March 30, 1926.

conflict. In South Africa no equilibrium between them has yet been achieved.

We cannot, therefore, look to South Africa for guidance in regard to the course of development to be followed in East and Central Africa. The larger part of the three mainland territories in East Africa is administered under a mandate from the League of Nations. The Mandatory Power is pledged in Tanganyika to promote to the utmost the moral and social well-being of the inhabitants. His Majesty's Government have laid down that the principle of trusteeship for the native races is as unassailable in Kenya and Uganda as in Tanganyika. They have added the interpretation that this means that native interests are to be paramount. No one will maintain that in South Africa native interests are, or can be, paramount, or that the moral and social well-being of the native inhabitants is being promoted to the utmost. The system of government which exists there has not thus far proved successful in reconciling the claims of white and black. If it has failed in this respect under conditions in which the proportion of white to black is one to three, it is wholly unsuited to conditions in East Africa, where the proportion is one in four hundred, and where His Majesty's Government are committed to promote in every way the advancement of the native peoples. It is obviously necessary to think out fresh solutions and to make new experiments. In the measure that these are successful, they may be of help to South Africa in the working out of its own difficult problems.

CHAPTER III

A WHITE DOMINION

General Smuts' thesis is, as we have seen, that the advance of Africa is possible only through the introduction of a higher civilization in the form of white settlement. If Africa is to be civilized, what is needed above everything is "a definite policy, the policy of European settlement, the establishment of a white community inside Africa which would form the steel framework of the whole ambitious structure of African civilization." Great Britain faces a supreme opportunity. It is the opportunity of promoting "a strong forward movement in the policy of settling the high lands of Eastern Africa which stretch in an unbroken belt, hundreds of miles broad, from Kenya to South Africa." The call comes to her "to carry out her historic mission and establish in the heart of the African continent and as a bulwark of its future civilization another white dominion." This seems to General Smuts to be "the next critical step in the evolution of the British Commonwealth of Nations." The fragments of Crown Colonies in Eastern and Central Africa "should be put in the way of becoming in time another important self-governing unit of the Empire."

There is much that is stirring in this appeal. No one who has a sense of the drama of human history can remain unmoved as there is brought before his mind the potentialities for good or evil for the life of mankind that lie in the meeting between the creative energies of western

civilization and the undeveloped races of a newly discovered continent. General Smuts sees, and has the rare gift of making others see, that we are dealing with great issues. He is aware that decisions of large historical importance are in the balance. He is moved by the thought that it lies in the power of the British people to shape the course of history in Africa.

A definite policy is put before us. Since it involves momentous decisions, the facts and arguments by which it is supported demand careful examination. Imagination in statesmen is a great and too rare quality; where there is no vision the people perish. But in order that dreams may be creative, it is necessary to keep touch with reality. Policies must have close regard to facts. Two main questions call for consideration—first, how far the proposed policy is consistent with respect for native rights, and, secondly, what exactly the policy means and to what extent it is practicable.

There may be those who think that the first question may be disregarded. It might be held that European civilization is so vastly superior to native forms of life that the race which has created that civilization, and is the bearer of it, has the right to displace the native population. It could be argued from history that stronger races have repeatedly dispossessed weaker, and that stern as are the workings of this law, it is nature's way of ensuring progress. But such a policy is not practicable in East Africa. First, because the natives are too numerous to be dispossessed. Secondly, because we are living in the twentieth century and public opinion would not tolerate a policy of extermination. Thirdly, because the white man cannot get on without the black. Nor is this in any sense the policy recommended by General Smuts. He starts from the position that "native interests must come first," and his argument is that white settlement under proper safeguards

is "the best means of giving effect to this priority." We may take it, then, that the two races must live together, and consequently must learn to adjust their relations with one another on a basis of justice. It follows that consideration of native rights is a limiting factor in carrying out a policy of white settlement.

There is agreement that that policy must not violate or overbear native rights. These are to have priority. On the other hand, in the light of the discussion in the preceding chapter it is not possible to accept the assertion that white settlement is necessarily the best means of giving effect to that priority and of promoting the advancement of the native peoples. The example of South Africa which was adduced in support of this contention appears on examination to contradict it.

We are free, therefore, without committing ourselves to any preconceived theory of the effect of white settlement on native progress, to consider the possibilities and advantages of promoting it on a grand scale in East Africa with a view to the creation of a new white dominion. We shall assume neither that white settlement must be injurious to native interests nor that it is necessarily beneficial. What is needed is an unprejudiced and unbiassed examination of the facts.

The area in which white settlement is to be promoted is "the highlands of East Africa which stretch in an unbroken belt, hundreds of miles broad, from Kenya to South Africa." There is, however, no such unbroken belt. Nothing could be more misleading than the suggestion that there is a continuous stretch of territory similar to the highlands of Kenya and equally suited to white settlement, stretching southwards to the Cape. Not only is there great variation in altitude, but rainfall and other climatic factors have to be taken into account. In considering areas suited for white settlement, what we find is not an unbroken belt, but a chain of islands

separated by stretches of quite unsuitable territory. Between the highlands of Kenya and those round Kilimanjaro lies the inhospitable and largely waterless region occupied by the Masai. Then comes another gap of about two hundred and fifty miles—an area, let us say, about the size of the Transvaal, or twice as large as England and Wales—before we reach the Iringa plateau. It is not an area where any white men would want to settle. On the Iringa plateau white plantations are possible, but it remains to be proved whether it is suited for permanent settlement. There is another large area that may be suitable for settlement in the south-west of Tanganyika and the Abercorn neighbourhood in Northern Rhodesia. South of that again there are great stretches of lower country, the suitability of which for permanent settlement is doubtful, until we reach the more temperate conditions of Southern Rhodesia.

We may consider next the present extent of white settlement in these areas. The examination of the facts, as will be seen from what is said later, is undertaken in no spirit of hostility to white settlement. But a cool and detached study of the facts must form the basis of any policy which is to further the real interests of East Africa, of the empire, and of the settlers themselves. Practical policies cannot be founded on the will to believe.

In Nyasaland and in Uganda there is at present no permanent white settlement. In the former about 2,000 square miles (apart from a large concession of the British South Africa Company, at present undeveloped), and in the latter about 250 square miles, have been alienated to non-natives. But it is safe to say that practically none of the European owners of these lands in either territory intend to settle permanently in the country and bring up their children there. The climatic conditions are not sufficiently attractive. Similarly there is at present very little permanent white settlement

in Tanganyika Territory. Here about 3,500 square miles of land have been alienated. But the owners of these lands are for the most part planters rather than settlers, and look forward to the day when, having amassed a sufficient competence, they can return to their native land. They are for the most part just as little permanent residents as officials, traders or missionaries. It may be held that the tendency will be for planters to become attached to the country and turn into settlers. But to some observers it appears that the tendency is at present in the other direction. Those who on arrival in the country appear to be intending settlers, are frequently found later on to be trying to lay down a few acres each year with coffee or sisal, and when these profitable crops begin to yield a good return, they look forward to disposing of the estate and returning to Great Britain, Germany or Greece.

There remains Kenya. In its highlands 11,000 square miles have been alienated to non-natives. The number of Europeans owning or occupying farms and plantations is about two thousand. Notwithstanding the advantages of a rich, virgin soil, of cheap labour and of liberal aid from public funds, there are, after twenty-five years of effort, only about 5,000 or 6,000 Europeans, including women and children, actually on the land. Nor can it be assumed that all of those who own farms or plantations in Kenya intend to settle permanently in the country. Some of the large owners of land are resident in England, and pay an occasional visit to East Africa, just as the owner of a deer forest in Scotland visits it for a few weeks in the year. A considerable number of the owners of estates in Kenya are retired army or naval officers or civil servants who are drawing a pension. They like an open-air life, and farming makes a welcome addition to their income, but they are not dependent on it for a living. A proportion of the estates are in the hands of

companies, and the number of estates held in this way appears to be increasing. The managers of such estates in many cases have no more intention of making their permanent home in East Africa than have those who are engaged in administration or trade. These are not the elements out of which a white civilization can be built up such as exists in Canada or Australia.

While this represents one view of the facts, it would not be accepted by many in Kenya. It would be claimed that the number of absentee landlords is small, and diminishing; that paid managers of estates and younger men employed on them in many instances acquire a farm of their own with a view to building for themselves a permanent home; that retired officers for the most part put their incomes and savings into their holdings, with a view to handing on the property to their children and heirs; and that local civil servants, more particularly in the lower grades, are increasingly making provision to settle down in Kenya itself.

These claims and hopes may be justified. But the question before us is not that of the natural growth of population in the white island of the settled areas in Kenya, but of "a great colonizing effort on the part of Great Britain," which will result in the establishment of "a large European population" in East and Central Africa and lay the foundation of "another white dominion." On this subject it is necessary for General Smuts to be more precise. We need some clearer indication of what is proposed.

In Uganda and Nyasaland there is no further land of any considerable extent to be alienated, nor, so far as we know at present, are these territories climatically suited for permanent settlement. In Kenya, according to the last Census Report, there is very little further Crown land suitable for alienation, and increase of settlement must proceed by sub-division of existing

estates. In the north-east of Tanganyika most of the available land has already been alienated, and there is no room for large expansion. There remain the Iringa plateau and the south-west highlands of Tanganyika. In regard to both these regions recent reports are not wholly encouraging.

It is inspiring to be told that after all native needs have been provided for " there will still be left immense unapportioned unoccupied areas " available for white settlement (loud cheers). But when the cheering has subsided, and the time comes to frame a policy, we have to get down to facts. Where are the areas ? It is true that there are considerable unoccupied areas in East Africa. But some of them are unoccupied because no one, not even the natives, wants to occupy them. Some are semi-arid and desert. Others are infested with tsetse fly. Much of the country under consideration is affected by malaria, tick fever, hookworm and other tropical diseases, which do not make white settlement attractive. The Tanganyika Central Railway, which traverses General Smuts' " unbroken belt," exhibits in its carriages a warning to travellers to take precautions against sleeping sickness.

Even in the most favourable regions the question of the suitability of climatic conditions for permanent white settlement cannot be regarded as finally settled. At the moment of writing a telegram from Nairobi announces the publication of a disquieting report on malaria in Kenya. The report recommends that houses on farms should be properly screened, and that new settlers should be discouraged from bringing their wives and families to the colony until they are able to provide proper housing. It is true that medical science may be able to overcome these and other difficulties, but extensive and continuous medical precautions are costly and add to the burden of white settlement.

General Smuts quite rightly calls attention to the mineral possibilities of Africa. It would appear, indeed, as though he regarded the existence of mines as necessary to his policy of white settlement. "Without mines to attract whites," he is reported to have said, "there would not be the settlers to settle nor the means to settle them with. That is a lesson which Rhodes had learned from the history of South Africa and other countries." The discovery of minerals in large quantities would transform the situation, as the discovery of diamonds and gold has altered the whole history of South Africa. But here again generalization is misleading. The one outstanding fact at present is the great copper deposits in Northern Rhodesia. Its significance can hardly be exaggerated. It creates a situation which calls for far-sighted planning. But there is not on the immediate horizon any corresponding development farther north. There are tin mines in Uganda and the north-west of Tanganyika, and diamond-bearing formations in the latter territory. But so far as present knowledge goes the main possibilities of the territory from Nyasaland to Kenya and Uganda lie in agriculture.

It is necessary for General Smuts to be more precise, not only in regard to the areas suited for white settlement, but also in regard to the form which white settlement is to take. It will hardly be disputed that there can never be a white civilization in East Africa, in the sense in which it exists in Europe or America or the white dominions, where all the activities and functions of society are performed by white men. In East Africa all the unskilled and most of the skilled labour will be done by natives. These will also in time fill the posts of clerks and minor functionaries. It is not economically possible in a tropical country to employ white men where natives can do the work. In planning for the development of a society, which must inevitably have this character, it

is necessary to be clear in our minds what functions white men are going to perform. Are they going to be farmers, and if so, what number is a given area likely to absorb? Are they to be planters and managers of estates? Are they to be engineers, managers of industrial undertakings, or foremen? Without clear thought on these matters, a policy of white settlement may have regrettable results. It may produce conditions in which white men find themselves adrift in a society in which they can find no employment.

General Smuts' contention is that European civilization in the form of white settlement is necessary to enable the African continent to advance. That purpose will be completely frustrated unless white civilization can be established on a foundation that will secure it against degradation. Unless we are prepared for the sake of immediate gains to mortgage the whole future, we must think of the generations that are to come. The emergence of the poor white, dragged down to the standards of living of a more backward civilization, is a menace which hangs over every society in which widely separated civilizations meet. To plunge recklessly into a policy of white settlement without the clear recognition of this danger and the provision of safeguards against it would be to exhibit a heartless indifference to the future welfare of our own kinsmen.

A further reason for caution and circumspection in the promotion of white settlement is the problem of labour. The question of the supply of labour dominates the whole economic situation. In every colony in Africa it holds a central place. It has its inter-colonial and international aspects. The large new demands that will be made by the copper mines in Northern Rhodesia will affect the labour problem in Tanganyika. The sisal and coffee growers in the north-east of Tanganyika, who draw a large part of their labour from the south-

west, are already anxious about the effect of these prospective developments, and the competition of the mines may make European agricultural enterprise in the south-west highlands unprofitable. It is impossible to pursue a policy of white settlement on an extended scale without examination of the labour problem. There can be no large increase of European farms or plantations without regard to the competing demands for labour from public works, mining enterprises and the cultivation of native crops, both for food and for export.

If what has been said is in the main a true account of the facts, any doubt or hesitation that may exist in regard to white settlement in East Africa is probably due much more to a better understanding of existing conditions and a fuller appreciation of the difficulties than, as General Smuts supposes, to a wave of humanitarian sentiment following on the war. It is an open question whether humanitarian feeling is as powerful a force in colonial affairs at the present time as it has been in some earlier periods of British history. In any case what humanitarian sentiment might claim, General Smuts concedes. Native rights are to have primary consideration. If native rights in land are adequately protected, there can be no objection to white settlement, where circumstances favour it.

Not only is a policy of white settlement, under these conditions, free from objection ; there is much to be said for its encouragement. White settlement is a desirable spur to progress. There is a large measure of truth in General Smuts' contention that enterprise and private initiative, the free experimentation and taking of risks, which are essential to industrial and economic success, are remote from the official routine of the civil servant. European enterprise prevents an administration from going to sleep, and in increasing by its energy

the general prosperity of the country contributes to the general advance.

There can be no question that the importance of the issues to be decided in Africa calls for a definite policy. But what is wanted is not a policy that can be expressed in slogans. It must be a discriminating policy. It must have thought behind it. It will include white settlement, but it must be much wider and more comprehensive than a policy of white settlement. It must be based on a recognition of the variety of forms in which European civilization can further African advancement. It is true that "the native needs the white man even more than the white man needs the native." European knowledge, experience, enterprise and direction are essential for the advance of Africa. But these can contribute in many ways besides white settlement to the progress of the continent. To lay the whole weight on white settlement is to take too simple a view of its problems and needs. These are too complex to yield to any panacea.

Different situations call for different treatment. The rapid development of the Kenya highlands could only have taken place through the establishment of large farms. On the other hand, experience throughout Africa seems to show that cotton, which is the staple crop of Uganda, is best grown by native cultivation in small holdings. The contribution of the white man to the progress of Africa may take many forms. It may be the establishment of European farms conducted by modern methods and with modern machinery. It may be the growing of crops requiring considerable capital expenditure in plantations organized on a large scale. It may be the development of the mineral resources of the continent by means of European enterprise and capital. It may be the guidance, oversight and assistance of native agriculture, as in the Gold Coast, Nigeria, and Uganda.

It may take the form of a partnership between the Government, European capital and management, and native cultivators as in certain districts in the Sudan. Which of these many forms of development is most appropriate in any given set of conditions cannot be determined theoretically in advance, but only by a careful study of all the relevant factors in the area in question.

The creative forces in the life of Africa at the present time are not limited to white settlement. They proceed from the insistent demand of the rest of the world for the products of the tropics. The economic forces set in motion by this demand are operative, and are effecting revolutionary changes, in vast areas where European settlement is impossible. What is needed is a comprehensive policy which will envisage the process as a whole. It must take account of the different forms of economic development that are possible, and favour that which is most appropriate to each area. Above all it must aim at relating the course of economic development to the human values and moral purposes, which give the deepest meaning to the contact of Europe with Africa.

CHAPTER IV

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRICAN

We started with the assumption that the chief asset of Africa is the African. The thing most worth doing in Africa is to help its peoples to make the best of themselves. If this is done all other necessary things will be added. The best means of increasing the production and improving the products of Africa is the improvement of the producers.

The development of the African is the subject with which General Smuts deals in the third of his Rhodes Lectures. We have in Africa a type, he tells us, possessing some wonderful characteristics, and it is our duty to conserve and develop it with the same high respect which we feel towards all great natural facts.

In the past, General Smuts says, we have tried two methods in dealing with the African which are both wrong. First we have looked on him as essentially inferior or sub-human and as being fit only to be a slave. Then we changed to the opposite extreme. The African now became a man and a brother. It was believed that liberty, equality and fraternity could turn bad Africans into good Europeans. The political system of the natives was ruthlessly destroyed in order to incorporate them as equals into the white system. We must abandon both of these attitudes. We must have a new policy. "If Africa is to be redeemed, if Africa is to make her own contribution to the world, if Africa is to take her rightful place among the continents, we have to proceed on

different lines and evolve a policy which will not force her institutions into an alien European mould, but will preserve her unity with her own past, and build her future progress and civilization on specifically African foundations. That should be the new policy."

The distinctive features of the new policy are two. The first is the territorial segregation of the races; they must occupy separate areas, in which each can develop its own institutions. The second is that the natives should be allowed to develop along their own lines.

In regard to segregation it may be noted, in the first place, that it is no longer a practicable policy in South Africa. Owing to mistakes made in the past, "the setting aside of sufficient lands for the natives" is, General Smuts admits, "impossible at present." White South Africa is unwilling to pay the price which alone would make possible any thorough-going application of a policy of segregation. Half the native population is outside the reserves and cannot be got back into them.

The Economic and Wage Commission (1925) in considering the relations between native labour and European industry in South Africa found it necessary to arrive at some conclusion regarding the probable economic future of the native. They were compelled to reject the view that it was possible and desirable in existing circumstances to keep him out of European industry and leave him to develop an independent economy of his own. They had to base their recommendations on the assumption that he would ultimately be absorbed in European industry and agriculture and assimilated to European economic institutions. This does not mean, of course, that the reserves have not an important part to play in the transition period. They serve two important purposes. By giving the natives an alternative or supplementary means of livelihood to

wage earning, they increase their bargaining power and are a safeguard against unfair exploitation. They also afford the best means of enabling the natives to maintain their morale in the difficult transition from primitive simplicity to the complexity of modern, economic civilization. But the ultimate result will be not segregation but economic assimilation.[1]

General Smuts would have the new territories to the north profit by the mistakes of South Africa, and reserve ample lands in which the natives can live and work. This is wise counsel. In East Africa, however, it is not a question of reserving lands for the natives, but of determining in predominantly native territories how much land can be assigned for white settlement. The discussion in South African terms of East African problems, which are entirely different in character, can result only in confused thinking. The East African picture becomes distorted when it is seen through South African spectacles. It is only in Kenya that there are native reserves, and Kenya, no less than Uganda and Tanganyika, has been declared by His Majesty's Government to be "primarily a native territory." White settlement in East Africa can only take the form of a few islands in the midst of a surrounding native population. We can heartily agree, however, with General Smuts that where the two races have to live together in the same territory it is desirable to create homogeneous native and non-native areas of sufficient size to enable each to develop its own distinctive institutions.

The question then arises of the relation between these separate areas, and on this subject the guidance we receive from General Smuts is not very clear. It is impressed upon us in this lecture that the African peoples must be allowed to develop along their own specific lines. They must not be forced into an alien

[1] *Report of the Economic and Wage Commission* (1925), pp. 152, 155.

mould. But in an earlier lecture we were told that "the civilization of the African continent would be a vain dream apart from white employment, without the leading hand of the settler and the employer, away from the continuous living contact with the actual example and the actual practice of European industry and agriculture." We now find that from the areas in which the natives are to be free to develop their own life and institutions this indispensable civilizing and educative influence is to be rigorously excluded. General Smuts appears to have undergone a conversion. The native peoples of Africa are, after all, to be left to the care of officials and missionaries, who, we were previously told, were "neither separately nor together competent to play the decisive part assigned to white settlement." Since "the easiest, most natural and obvious way to civilize the African native is to give him decent white employment," which is his best school, it is evident that, if the races are to be segregated, the natives must either be deprived of this superior form of education, or they must go out of the reserves to get it, *i.e.* they must to this extent cease to be segregated. Evidently the latter is what General Smuts means, and it would, of course, be impossible to carry out his policy of extensive settlement and mining development unless a very large proportion of natives did seek employment outside the reserves.

From the strictly educational point of view the arrangement does not seem very satisfactory. The education which is proposed for the native, and which he can get only outside the reserves, is somewhat unrelated to his community life. It does not seem well adapted to help him in "building the future progress and civilization of Africa on specifically African foundations." Moreover the women are not to have the opportunity of obtaining this higher kind of education,

and for the advancement of a community the women are as important as the men. There is weighty educational support for the view that a greater proportional impulse is given to the progress of a people by the education of its women than of its men. But in this case "the family life in the home will continue on traditional lines; the routine of the family and of the tribe will not be altered in any respect." Again, a community which is expected to evolve a new civilization on "specifically African foundations," to make its own contribution to the world and to help Africa to take its rightful place among the continents, is somewhat handicapped in the achievement of these not unambitious aims, if a large proportion of its able-bodied males are prevented from sharing in the life and activities of the community. As an educational programme for the advancement of the African peoples the system leaves a good deal to be desired.

The question of what takes place in the native areas of Africa is the most important question relating to the continent. In considering it, we must take into account the second feature of "the new policy," namely, that the African must be allowed to develop "along his own lines."

The dominant fact in the life of Africa to-day is that the restless European is in control, that there is a world demand for what Africa can produce and that the native peoples have to meet that demand. The rest of the world will not leave the African alone. He cannot escape contact with European industry. General Smuts' policy of settlement and mining development is only practicable if there is available a large supply of native labour. Even where there is no white settlement the economic exploitation of the continent is proceeding apace. Though the natives may cultivate crops on their own account they have to produce for modern markets and

are exposed to the pressure of the forces of the outside world. The African has to adjust himself to the new influences which are invading his world. That world is being transformed, and he too has to change.

There can be no progress of the African peoples which does not involve change. But while the African must absorb new ideas and acquire new habits if he is to adjust himself to his changing world, the most momentous consequences depend on the way in which the inevitable changes take place. If change is not to be destructive it must be gradual. There can be no magical transformation of social institutions. Social adjustments require time. The peoples of Africa are being exposed to an unparalleled strain. Changes which in older civilizations were the slow evolution of centuries are being brought about in Africa in a generation. It is a matter of vital importance to prevent a too hasty disintegration of native society. If this should take place, there would be left only an aggregate of human atoms, liberated from the salutary rules and customs which guarded the lives of their fathers and subject only to the restraints of an alien law, which they do not understand, which has no roots in tradition or social custom and which consequently makes no appeal to their natural loyalties.

It is to avoid these dangers that Lord Lugard and other experienced administrators have advocated a policy of indirect rule—a policy, that is to say, which takes full account of existing native institutions and enlists the intelligence and interests of the people in their own progress. The strongest motives in existing African society, such as loyalty to the chiefs and the solidarity of clan tradition, can in this way be made to contribute to social evolution. Social institutions can develop naturally from within through the gradual absorption of new ideas and adaptation of institutions to changing conditions, and the growth of a genuinely African culture

becomes possible. The opportunity is provided for the natives, in the words of Sir Donald Cameron, " to evolve, in accordance with their traditions and their most deeply rooted instincts, as an organized and disciplined community within the state."

A wise policy must seek both to conserve the valuable elements in native society and tradition, and to provide for growth. There is no salvation to be found in the mere maintenance of native institutions. The policy of indirect rule is not one of stagnation. Like all good things, however, it may suffer corruption. A statesman-like policy, inspired by wise educational principles, may harden into a formula and become an obstacle to reform. That these dangers have not been wholly avoided in Northern Nigeria is suggested in a recent stimulating study of African problems.[1] Complaints are made that in Basutoland developments required in the interests of the country are hindered by the attitude of unprogressive chiefs. Indirect rule requires the continuous supervision and stimulus of a European government.

The conditions in different parts of Africa vary exceedingly. There can be no uniformity in policy. But whether the contacts between the native peoples and western civilization are few or many, nowhere is there complete segregation. The whole of Africa is subject to European influence. The question is not whether there should be contact between black and white, but how the contacts in their many, varying forms are to be controlled and directed for the good of Africa. The reaction of no two individuals, and of no two tribes, to European influence is identical. Hence no formula can be of use. No practical policy is more than an expedient to serve at best for a generation or two, until conditions change and call for a new orientation of

[1] Murray, *The School in the Bush*, pp. 272–90.

policy. But there are certain guiding principles which emerge from experience and which can be applied in ways appropriate to varying conditions.

The first is that the task of white civilization in all its manifold activities is educational. The fundamental business of government in Africa is education. The responsibility of trusteeship means more than the protection of the native peoples from injustice. It calls for active exertion to help the African to make the best of himself. This conception of the mission of Europe, with the increasing aid we may hope of America, may well stir the imagination of those who care for their fellowmen. It transcends in interest the work of exploration, the development of communications, the exploitation of minerals or the improvement of agriculture. Absorbing as is the interest of all these undertakings, human beings are more interesting than any of them. The philosophy of education is a notoriously dull subject. But those who, as administrators, educators, missionaries or technical officers, have been in actual touch with Africans, have known the fascination of helping them to develop the best that is in them.

The task is one in which all agencies must help. The improvement of the physique of the people and the care of public health are foundations to be laid by the medical services. The work of the agricultural and veterinary services is needed to assist in this effort by improving the food supply, while at the same time it contributes to progress by increasing agricultural wealth. Employment in public works provides a training in industry and skill. The white employer can provide lessons in the methods and standards of a higher civilization. The task of the school is to interpret to the African both what is valuable in his own culture and the new forces that are invading his life. The methods and technique of the trained anthropologist must be called

upon to illuminate primitive social problems and the diffusion of European influence among native communities. The task of the administrative officer and of the central government is to unify these forces and to direct them to the common end of the economic and social progress of the people. Religion has its necessary contribution to make in showing the relation of these varied forms of human service to a divine purpose for the life of man, and in supplying them with an adequate motive and sanction. No one of these agencies can afford to be indifferent to the activities of the others.

A second principle of universal application is that the forces which are reshaping the life of African peoples, as well as the deliberate efforts for their education, must be so controlled and guided as to prevent too violent and catastrophic change. The aim must be not to uproot native institutions but to promote their healthy evolution. The valuable and serviceable elements in African tradition and society must be conserved and developed. The ability of the African to assimilate what he must learn from Europe will depend on his respect for his own culture and pride in his own institutions, which, though still in a primitive stage, are capable of being developed in accordance with his distinctive genius. His gifts of perception, wisdom and imagination have found expression in an inexhaustible store of proverbs and folk-lore. His art, notwithstanding General Smuts' denial of its existence, has had an appreciable influence on the modern art of Europe.[1] He has an exceptional gift for music, greater probably than that of Europeans.[2]

An understanding of the living forces and elements of value in African society can be obtained only by

[1] Cf. an article on "African Sculpture" by Eckart von Sydow in *Africa*, vol. i, No. 2 (April, 1928), pp. 210–27.

[2] Cf. "African Music," by E. M. von Hornbostel, in *Africa*, vol. i, No. 1 (January, 1928), pp. 30–62.

patient study. Without this knowledge it is impossible to foresee what will be the effect of interference with native custom. In native society, religion, law, primitive economics and social custom form a blended whole, and changes introduced without an understanding of their effect may undermine the entire social fabric. For the successful carrying out of the administrative and educational responsibilities of governments in Africa, the aid of scientific anthropology is indispensable. We are witnessing in Africa one of the greatest crises in history, in the contact of an advanced civilization with the primitive races of a continent, and the situation calls for continued, patient study by those who have the gift of understanding and sympathy for ways of life widely different from their own.

Much the most powerful of the disintegrating forces by which African society is threatened is the demand for labour resulting from the economic exploitation of the continent. It is essential, therefore, that the economic forces should be held in check so as to prevent them from destroying the foundations of native life, on the preservation and strengthening of which permanent progress must depend. The Belgians, in consequence of the serious depopulation of the Congo which has followed on the European occupation, have been the first to realize the necessity of devoting serious study to this problem.[1]

A third principle which needs to be borne continuously in mind is that education is concerned with the growth of persons. Its purpose is to develop the capacity, initiative and character of Africans so that they may be able increasingly to master the environment in which they find themselves. There is nothing so educative as responsibility. If education is taken in its

[1] *Rapport de la Commission pour l'Étude du Problème de la Main-d'Œuvre au Congo Belge*, 1925.

largest sense, native self-governing institutions, in which the people under the supervision of European officers manage their own local affairs and administer public funds for this purpose, are as important an educational agency as the schools. The African must share in his own education. As Dr. Aggrey used repeatedly to say, what the African needs and wants is Europeans who will work not only for him, but with him. It must never be forgotten that while an immense responsibility rests on the European rulers and educators of Africa for the wise guidance of the development of its peoples, the larger say in that development will lie with the Africans themselves. Co-operation between Europeans and Africans is the condition of success.

On the successful accomplishing of the task of developing the peoples of Africa the whole future of the continent depends. In whose hands, so far as East and Central Africa is concerned, is its general direction to lie? The question has only to be asked for it to become clear that the responsibility is not one which can be assumed by the local European community. That community is too directly interested in its own immediate needs for native labour to take the detached, comprehensive and far-sighted view that is necessary. Its numbers and resources, moreover, are quite insufficient for so vast an undertaking. It has come to be recognized in recent years that the mineral and agricultural resources of the various parts of the empire can be fully developed only by the effective imperial organization of available scientific resources. The best brains that can be found must be enlisted in the task and must work in co-operation. The same far-sighted planning is needed if success is to be achieved in the more difficult task of the education of backward peoples. It is an imperial task of the first magnitude and importance.

CHAPTER V

THE POLITICAL PROBLEM

THERE are two classes of persons to whom the political problem of East Africa appears relatively easy of solution. Each succeeds in simplifying it by fixing attention on one side of the problem and minimizing the importance of the other.

One class consists of those whose attention is concentrated on the natives. They ask why policy in East Africa should not follow the same lines as in West Africa. Their solution of the difficulties is the continuance of Crown Colony government in its present form. It is not difficult to frame in England an unexceptionable policy which will secure for the natives on paper all that the doctrine of trusteeship requires. Whether such declarations can control the forces of life in East Africa is another question. Though the resident Europeans may be few in number they embody a fund of exuberant energy. They make a breach in the dam of Africa's isolation, through which the energies of western civilization can enter the continent not with the regulated pace of a mill stream but with the gathering force of an ocean tide. Their mere presence brings new forces in its train. They have introduced into the country not merely themselves but the restless activity which is characteristic of Europe. The rapid improvement of communications attracts in increasing numbers visitors from the outside world, who discover fresh opportunities for the investment of capital and the exploitation

of untapped resources. Railways, roads and aeroplanes are linking East Africa by easy and quick communication with both South Africa and Europe. The immense mining developments in Northern Rhodesia cannot be without a far-reaching influence on the whole of East and Central Africa.

Ideas that sufficed for a more sedate and slow-moving past are inadequate to meet the problems of the rapidly changing world of the twentieth century. We have to take into our reckoning forces which are as yet little susceptible of political control. What determines the conditions of men's lives to-day is far less the deliberate purposes of statesmen than the unforeseen consequences of scientific discovery. As has been well said by Mr. Walter Lippman, "a really new thing has come into the world. That thing is the invention of invention. Mechanical progress has ceased to be casual and accidental and has become systematic and cumulative." [1] A scientist in his laboratory may be a greater revolutionary in effecting changes in the life of peoples, who are unaware even of his existence, than the political agitator who leads a mob to the barricades. One prodigious consequence of the introduction of these new forces into Africa is the migration of population in search of employment, which is the outstanding fact in the life of the continent to-day. The extent to which white settlement already exists in East and Central Africa ensures that these developments will proceed at an accelerating pace, and full weight must be given to this fact in the consideration of political arrangements.

The other class of persons who incline to a too easy solution of the East African problem are those who take for granted that the African will not greatly change. This assumption seems to underlie much of General Smuts' argument. It colours his picture of the African

[1] Lippman, *A Preface to Morals*, p. 235.

race as a child type, with a child psychology and outlook, as lacking initiative, as free from the stirrings of divine discontent characteristic of Europeans, as taking readily to a routine settled by a white employer, and as easily contented when given some bones to chew and plenty of matter to wrangle over. This may apply to some aspects of African life, but it is not a complete picture. It is not applicable to the progressive chiefs in West Africa or among the Baganda, to the prosperous merchants of the West Coast, to the natives who are driving engines and performing skilled work in Central Africa, or to the leaders of native opinion in South Africa. The description does not accord with the remarkable progress of the negro race in the United States during the last fifty years. As a characterization of the qualities and outlook represented in such a book as Dr. Moton's *What the Negro Thinks* it must evoke a smile.

The problem is unduly simplified if we shut our eyes to the fact that the native peoples are growing. They are receiving education. They are absorbing new ideas. They are becoming articulate. They are developing their own aspirations and ambitions. No more fundamental or fatal mistake could be made than to suppose that the African continent is something to be moulded by the white man according to his pleasure, and to forget that the most important fact in Africa is the immense fund of latent capacity and of irrepressible human energy embodied in the native population. It is to a large extent true that the negroid peoples have thus far shown little capacity to establish a fully developed political society or to create a civilization of their own. It may be that generations must pass before they can dispense with aid from outside. But long before that time comes, they will be able to express purposes of their own and to demand that regard be paid to them.

Insufficient account is taken of this inevitable development in General Smuts' dream of a white dominion. The idea of a self-governing unit under white domination presupposes an acquiescent black population. On what grounds can this assumption be made? It is a fact of the utmost significance that the natives of South Africa, deprived of political rights except in Cape Colony, have already succeeded in making themselves the most important issue in South African politics. Of hardly less significance are the first beginnings of trades-union organization, and of recourse to modern methods of industrial conflict such as the strike. The economic issues arising out of the presence of cheap native labour have cut clean across the racial division of Boer and Briton and led to a realignment of parties. White South Africa is aware, as its most recent historian has pointed out, that the issues on which the two sections of Europeans have hitherto divided are "as nothing to the issues raised by contact with non-Europeans."[1] If these things are happening in South Africa, where the black population is only three times as large as the white, what may we expect in East Africa where the proportion of black to white is a hundredfold greater, and where an active policy of native education is being pursued by the governments and is for economic reasons indispensable?

The history of modern industry in Europe and America has led to an increasing recognition of the central importance of the human factor. It is now clearly perceived that workers are not simply "hands," but persons with minds and wills and feelings, and that industry will succeed in proportion as it is able to enlist their intelligence, goodwill and co-operation. No industrial policy can claim to be scientific or, in the long run, successful, which ignores the man inside the workman. This truth is even more important in Africa where

[1] Walker, *A History of South Africa*, p. 599.

the worker is of different race and antecedents from the employer. No greater and more disastrous error could be committed than to plan for the development of the economic resources of Africa and to leave the human factor out of account. European civilization in Africa has to contend with two forces which it may find itself unable in the end to control. The one is the ravages of insect life and bacteria, which threaten the health and existence of plants, animals and men. The other is the untamable impulses of man himself. The public mind has awakened to some extent in recent years to the necessity of meeting the first of these dangers, and great strides have been made in the scientific organization required for dealing with it. The urgent present need is that a corresponding amount of thought and effort should be devoted to the human factor in the development of the resources of the new continent. Nothing but calamity can result from failure to study and understand the African as a living and growing person with feelings, ideas and purposes of his own.

Let us, then, in approaching the question of the form of government best suited to the conditions of the territories in East and Central Africa, try to keep both sets of factors of the problem steadily in view. Let us have full regard both to the European with his known energy and proved capacity and to the African with all his latent possibilities.

The crucial question on which we have to make up our minds is whether parliamentary institutions, as they have developed in the self-governing portions of the empire, are suited to the conditions which at present exist in East and Central Africa, where races so widely separated in civilization and in present capacity are living together. In such circumstances can questions in which the interests of the different races are in conflict be justly and advantageously decided by the vote of a majority

in a legislative assembly? The answer to this question in the report of the Hilton Young Commission was an emphatic negative. Notwithstanding all the discussion of the report which has taken place, no reasoned reply has yet been attempted to the arguments of the Commission on this subject.

If the method of deciding questions involving a conflict of racial interests is to be by the vote of a majority in a legislative assembly, we have to choose between two alternatives. The first is to create an assembly in which there is a permanent European majority, and in which consequently white can always outvote black. This would not be the setting up of parliamentary institutions. It would be the antithesis of the parliamentary system. The essence of that system is that the opposition which is temporarily in a minority has always open to it the possibility of persuading a sufficient number of people of the rightness of its views to become a majority. But under the proposed system in East Africa the political minority, *i.e.* the representatives of native interests, who would in fact represent the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the territory, could never become a political majority.

The proposed arrangement is not only something quite different from the parliamentary system, but it is manifestly unsuited to achieve what ought to be the primary purpose of government in Africa, namely, the most rapid advancement of the native peoples. It is contrary to all experience and to our knowledge of average human nature that a class entrusted with political power should not use that power primarily to further what it believes to be its own interests. In all political assemblies the interests of the unrepresented and unprivileged are apt to receive scant attention. The economic and social advance of the native population, which is essential to the progress of Africa, would tend

to be relegated to a secondary place, as it has been in South Africa.

In the discussions which preceded the grant of self-government to Cape Colony, it was argued that the interests of the native population would be sufficiently protected, because the colonists would be led by a sense of their own self-interest and sense of justice to conduct their relations with the natives in an equitable fashion.[1] But while the native policy of the Cape has been more liberal than in other provinces, our examination of conditions in the Union shows that the expectations have not been fully realized. The lessons of history compel us to seek for some alternative system for territories that are far more predominantly native than South Africa.

It cannot be too often repeated that objection to the proposed arrangement is not based on any distrust of the character and fair-mindedness of the settlers. The objection is to a system which even under the most favourable conditions is not suited for achieving the purposes of government in East Africa.

The other alternative, if racial questions are to be determined by the vote of a majority in a legislative assembly, is to create a constitution under which it would be possible for black, sooner or later, to outvote white. This would be to run the risk of transferring the direction of affairs to the native peoples before they are qualified by education and experience to assume the responsibility.

General Smuts definitely contemplates the ultimate representation of the native population in the supreme legislature. "It is repugnant to our civilized European ideas," he says, "that the weak in a community should not be heard or should go without representation, where their interests are concerned. There can be but one sovereign body in a country and that body should repre-

[1] C. W. de Kiewiet, *British Colonial Policy and the South African Republics*, pp. 211–12.

sent the weaker no less than the stronger." Anything else would, indeed, be impossible, if representative government, leading ultimately to responsible government, were set up. But where there are such wide racial differences as are found in East Africa, political evolution along these lines would be attended by grave disadvantages and encounter difficulties that might prove insuperable. To maintain their position of political privilege and to protect the standards of a higher civilization, a large part of the energies of the white community would be spent in resisting political encroachments by the natives. The minds of the latter would be diverted from the promotion of their own economic and social advancement to political agitation. A racial struggle for political power would hinder the co-operation of white and black which is necessary for economic progress and the welfare of both races. It would render impossible a disinterested and far-sighted policy of economic development and of the education of the African peoples which is necessary for the fulfilment of the historic mission of Europe in Africa.

In view of these grave disadvantages it becomes necessary to ask whether there is not some alternative to an attempt to reproduce in East Africa parliamentary institutions, as these have developed among homogeneous communities. The decision of questions by the vote of a majority is not the only way of settling differences between classes and communities. It is not attempted in international affairs. It could not be employed at Geneva. The Great Powers are not prepared to allow questions affecting their interests to be determined by a majority vote in an assembly in which the smaller states predominate, just as the stronger European community in East Africa is not willing to be outvoted by the preponderant but less experienced native population. But it is equally impossible to create a League of Nations

in which the more powerful nations would be able to coerce the weaker. And it is in the same way undesirable that the white community in East Africa should possess the power to impose its will upon the black.

Sir Josiah Stamp drew attention in a recent address to the growing recognition in both industrial and international relations that the proper adjustment between parties, who each naturally feel the force of their own interests or contentions more than those of the other side, must be brought about not by brute force but, with ultimate gain to both sides, " by the application of an impartial and disinterested but skilled judgment." If it is agreed that it is neither right nor in the ultimate interests of either race that the white community should be able to impose its will upon the black, nor the black upon the white, the only alternative is that conflicts of interest between them should be determined by an impartial outside authority.

If this is the conclusion to which we are inevitably driven by the study of East African conditions, it becomes necessary to ask whether the existing machinery for the exercise of imperial control is the best that can be devised for the purpose. If the communities in East Africa are to refrain from attempting to impose their will by superiority of voting power, and to consent that differences between them should be determined by an impartial tribunal, it is necessary that the decisions to which they are asked to submit should command the utmost possible respect and confidence. If the decisions are to be loyally accepted, they must possess the greatest moral authority with which they can be invested. They must be recognized to be impartial ; the judgment must be a skilled judgment ; and it must have the effective support of public opinion. It is a question whether the existing machinery fulfils adequately any of the requirements.

The fact that the over-riding decisions are made by a distant authority, lacking sufficiently close personal contact with those who have to submit to them, weakens confidence in their impartiality. The local communities are not satisfied that they have had an adequate opportunity of contributing their experience to the judgment which they are asked to accept. It appears to them that the deciding authority is more accessible to persons in England than to those who have invested their fortunes in Africa. They are afraid that strings may be pulled at home. They are suspicious of the influences which used to be associated with Exeter Hall. It is very doubtful whether these influences are in fact as powerful as those which are exerted by the settlers and their friends. But the suspicion remains, and will be a serious hindrance to effective imperial control, until means can be devised which will give to all parties the assurance that in vital decisions their views have been fully expressed, rightly understood and adequately considered.

The present machinery, again, does not provide a sufficient guarantee that the judgment will be in the fullest sense a skilled judgment. That machinery is appropriate for dealing with administrative questions. It is not suitable for the decision of what are essentially political questions. A skilled judgment in such matters presupposes direct contact with the parties concerned. It cannot be based on documents and reports alone; it can be reached only through living touch with an actual situation. It must be preceded by discussion in which all parties can state their own case and hear the case of the other side.

For these reasons the decisions of the over-riding authority under the present system lack effective public support. There is no public knowledge of the grounds on which the decision has been reached. The public

have no assurance that every side of the case has been fully canvassed and that all the experience necessary to a right decision has been laid under contribution. The reports of the Dawes and Young Commissions, as General Smuts points out, received the public support needed to give effect to them because public opinion in all countries recognized that every relevant consideration had been weighed and the only possible basis of agreement had been found. The value of these Commissions lay not only in the work they did, but in the fact that they were typical of a new method of dealing with public questions.

In the contact of the white and black races in Africa to-day we have to do with one of the greatest and most difficult problems in human history. The more closely it is examined, the more evident it becomes that traditional political conceptions and methods are insufficient for dealing with it. Parliamentary institutions are clearly not suited to the conditions that are found in East Africa. The existing system of Crown Colony government, which was brought into existence to deal with problems entirely different from those which confront us in East Africa in the twentieth century, is likewise inadequate. New ideas and new solutions are required.

CHAPTER VI

THE LINES OF A SOLUTION

In the search for fresh solutions there is no little stimulus, suggestion and guidance to be derived from the lectures of General Smuts. When he turns from Africa to the problems of modern democracy and international relations his quick and fertile mind seizes on certain modern tendencies which may prove as fruitful in the political evolution of East Africa as he believes them to be in the wider affairs of the world.

When he discusses the future of East Africa he has no more exciting suggestion to make than that the history of South Africa, shorn of its abuses, should be repeated under conditions a hundred times more unfavourable to the success of the experiment. When he is dealing with international affairs, we find a wholly different General Smuts. He is living in a world of revolution and of miracle. He feels the forward thrust of one of the creative movements of history. Great events interacting with the human spirit have become pregnant with meaning. "The absolute sovereignties of Europe and the world have been brought to sit round a table as a regular constitutional routine, to discuss their most intimate affairs with each other, to submit their legal differences to a court of international justice, and their political or national differences to mediation or conciliation boards. . . . Looked at in its true light, in the light of the ages and of the time-honoured ideas and practice of mankind, we are beholding

an amazing thing—we are witnessing one of the great miracles of history." Even those whose expectations of what the League of Nations can accomplish are more restrained than those of General Smuts will acknowledge that its formation is a creative act of the first importance in the political life of the world. Part of its significance is found in the fact that it provides a means of adjusting differences between communities other than decision by the vote of a majority. If the overpowering necessity of preventing modern war with its appalling destruction of life and wealth was the mother of the League of Nations, why should not the imperative need of co-operation between the white and black races in developing the riches of a new continent for the well-being of mankind result in new political invention in Africa?

In his lecture on "The Future of Democracy" General Smuts offers more definite and specific guidance. For dealing with the problems of the world to-day we must look increasingly to science. Democracy by itself is not enough. Statesmen are not enough. The foundations of the modern state must be securely based on modern science.

"The rise of the sciences is the most outstanding fact of the modern world, and has led to the most far-reaching changes in human view-points, in human betterment, in individual and national power. Eventually it will lead to the greatest changes in human government. The rise has been so sudden that our political institutions have not yet had time even to begin adjusting themselves to the new situation. But science is necessary to the modern state, and should have its functional relation to the state. . . . It may yet become the governing factor in our human organization." Where passion, prejudice and illusion have ruled, science brings in an attitude of disinterestedness. Its concern with

facts has a sobering and stabilizing influence. The more men are compelled to look at facts, the more reasonable they become and the easier they find it to agree.

This change, as General Smuts recognizes, is already taking place in industry. The old issues between capital and labour are being transformed, because the expert is coming to his own. Modern business has become so complicated that more and more the real reliance is coming to be placed on expert knowledge. All parties are coming increasingly to submit their desires to what Mr. Lippman has called "the discipline of objective information."[1] The management of business is becoming increasingly disinterested.

General Smuts would like similar recognition to be given to expert knowledge in political affairs. He regards the achievements of the Dawes and Young Commissions as a victory for the scientific attitude, "not only notable in itself, but far-reaching as a pointer on the future road of human government." He would give the political expert a recognized place in the system of government. "Great party disputes, which threaten the tranquillity or the progress of the state, should be remitted to a body of experts, whose personal characters and reputations confer exceptional authority on them, and whose recommendations should be available as a guide for public opinion and the government."

In this lecture General Smuts lays his finger on one of the most significant tendencies in modern life. Can it be doubted that this is the direction in which modern industry is moving, and that it is the direction in which government also must move? And if this is true, why should not the ideas which hold the future be brought to bear on the difficult problems of the relations of white and black in Africa? Just because Africa is still only at the beginning of its development, its problems are

[1] Lippman, *A Preface to Morals*, p. 257.

simpler than those of the more complex society of Europe and America, and are, consequently, more susceptible of scientific treatment. Why should not East Africa become the field of fruitful experiment along the lines which General Smuts indicates ?

In considering the problems of government in East Africa the first necessity is to decide what we want to achieve. Only when our ultimate purposes are clear can we judge what machinery is best adapted for their accomplishment. The main objects of policy have emerged in the course of the preceding discussions.

What is needed is a far-sighted policy which will aim at the economic development of the great resources of the territories in question on scientific lines in the interests of the native inhabitants, the immigrant European and Indian communities, the empire and the world, and at the same time promote the physical, intellectual, moral and social advance of the African peoples. It will encourage and assist both native and non-native enterprise. It will promote white settlement where there is room for it and the conditions are favourable, and at the same time secure a proper balance between its claims and the predominant interests of the native population. The economic development of these large areas is a colossal business undertaking. It can be successfully carried out only with the help of the scientific resources of the empire. It is at the same time more than a business undertaking. It is the responsibility of a state, for which the welfare of its subjects must be the dominant consideration. Human interests must always be kept in the foreground. The development of the people is more important than the development of the territories, and is at the same time the most important contribution that can be made to the development of the territories. Economic policy must be the handmaid of educational policy. The science, experience, administrative and

creative gifts of the white race must be directed primarily to enabling the peoples of Africa to develop their latent powers and possibilities.

The foundations of such a policy have already been laid. It is astonishing to recall how much progress has been made in the past few years. We have seen the institution of the Committee of Civil Research, the first public announcement of which, it is worth remembering, was made in a debate in the House of Lords on the subject of Kenya. While the limited resources at the disposal of the Committee have not allowed it to carry out the full programme outlined by Lord Balfour on that occasion, it has promoted investigations of the chemical composition of pastures in East Africa, the constituents of native diet, the problems of sleeping sickness and other important questions. The Empire Marketing Board has been brought into existence and has made liberal grants for scientific research. Provision has been made for the co-ordination of agricultural and veterinary research in the dependencies, and for linking it with research throughout the Empire by the formation of a Colonial Advisory Council of Agriculture and Animal Health. An Imperial College of Agriculture has been established at Trinidad. The Amani Institute has been re-established and re-equipped for the purposes of agricultural research in East Africa.

In the field of human welfare we have seen the appointment of a Chief Medical Adviser at the Colonial Office, and the formation of a Colonial Advisory Medical and Sanitary Committee, and a Colonial Medical Research Committee. There has also been set up an Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies with two whole-time secretaries. Further, there has come into existence the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, which has as one of its main objects to establish a closer relation between anthropological science and

the practical tasks of administration and education. Though it is independent of government, it is supported by financial contributions from most of the Governments in Africa as well as from private sources.

The ground has thus already been fully prepared for an attempt to bring the resources of science and the vitalizing and stabilizing influence of the scientific attitude to bear on the problems of government in East Africa. Much of the preliminary work has been done. Most of the machinery needed is ready to hand. We have only to go forward along the lines already marked out. The next step would seem to be to bring about a closer co-ordination between the agencies that are already at work. Economic policy and educational policy need to be brought into more intimate relation with one another. In the speech in which he announced the appointment of the Committee of Civil Research, Lord Balfour said : " I think that what we want is some machinery by which the larger problems which we now see are presented to us by this vast area in East Africa and other problems from other parts of our Empire may be more conveniently considered in their entirety. . . . I believe that such a machinery could be created and I believe that nothing short of a machinery of that kind will enable us to deal with the tremendous problems of East Africa." [1] What was in Lord Balfour's mind is plainly the same idea which found expression in the lecture of General Smuts. Though the progress already made is encouraging, the goal still lies far ahead.

It is impossible to insist too strongly on the fact that modern science has opened up new possibilities in dealing with the problems of the dependencies. We are living in a different kind of a world from half a century ago. It is not necessary to assume that the course followed in regard to the South African colonies is the only course

[1] Hansard, House of Lords, May 20, 1925, vol. 61, No. 44.

open to us in East Africa. None of the machinery which has been described above was in existence in earlier days. Communications were far less rapid. It would be foolish to suppose that we are shut up to the political ideas or political machinery of the past. The opportunity is present, if we choose to seize it, to create something new and better.

If the objects of policy are those which have been outlined, it is clear that the direction of policy must lie with the Imperial Government. It would be impossible for the local community to assume responsibility for carrying out an economic and educational policy such as has been described. It could not provide a government with the experience and resources necessary to give effect to so extensive a programme. Only the organization which is available at the headquarters of the empire can make the programme possible.

If the determination of the broad lines of economic and educational policy is to rest with the Imperial Government, it must retain the means of giving effect to its decisions. It is impossible to separate the control of economic and educational policy from political control. In the modern world economic questions and education are almost the whole of politics. Whatever form of government is set up in East Africa it must be of such a nature as to provide for the direction of economic and educational development by the Imperial Government.

Thus far there will probably be agreement. It will not be questioned that the kind of policy which has been described can be carried out only by an authority which is able to take a long and detached view and a view wider than that of any sectional interest. The settlers in Kenya have publicly stated that they have never questioned the necessity for an outside authority to hold the scales of justice even between the different races. What

is not so clearly recognized is the implications of the view that has been stated.

If the main principles of economic and educational policy, and the application of these principles in cases where there is a conflict of racial interests, are to be determined by the Imperial Government, they cannot be settled by the vote of an unofficial majority in a local legislative assembly. Within the limits of the policy decided upon by the Imperial Government there may be many matters which can be decided with advantage in that way. But it is not a method by which questions involving the responsibilities of the Imperial Government can be decided. For the decision of these questions machinery of a quite different kind is required.

If this is recognized, we shall not set up a constitution under which the normal method of deciding all questions is by vote in an assembly, in which the majority of members are unofficials, while the imperial authority is invested with powers which enable it to revise the decisions of the assembly when things go wrong. The imperial authority then comes to be regarded as an external check on the normal working of the constitution, and its intervention tends to be resented. These arrangements belong to the old order of political ideas from which we want to get away. They do not provide a place for the newer conceptions of government to which General Smuts has directed attention. An alternative method of deciding a certain class of questions is proposed, not because a check is wanted on the proceedings of a legislative body, but because it is in itself a more appropriate and better way of deciding questions of that nature. It must therefore be included in the constitution as part of its normal machinery, and the two methods must have equal recognition as the appropriate means of dealing with different classes of questions.

It is not a repudiation of the underlying conceptions of democracy to hold that in certain circumstances the method of deciding issues by the vote of a majority is inapplicable. The essence of democracy is that the interests of individuals and of classes should be subordinated to the common good. Decision by the vote of a majority is a rough-and-ready, and often a very crude and imperfect, way of determining what is the common good. It is a tolerable method, because if a mistake has been made those who have been outvoted quickly gain reinforcements and can reverse the decision. The method is inapplicable to East Africa because the majority of the inhabitants are excluded from the franchise. Decision by a majority is merely a political device for achieving a certain end. There is nothing in the nature of things which makes fifty-one per cent. of votes a guarantee of wisdom and truth. This was no doubt in the mind of General Smuts when he said that democracy is not enough. If there are other means of arriving at wisdom and truth and of achieving the common good, they may quite well be substituted for the political device of a majority vote. In the conditions of East Africa it is necessary to find such other means.

It is none the less true that no form of government can be regarded as satisfactory which does not make provision for enlisting in the task of government all the experience, capacity and initiative which may be found among the local communities. To urge that the scientific attitude and method should become an increasing factor in government is not to advocate the rule of a bureaucracy. Private enterprise and initiative, as General Smuts rightly maintains, are a valuable stimulus and spur to government. It would be a bad form of government which failed to provide an adequate opportunity for the representatives of non-native enter-

prise to influence the views and actions of government. It is no less important that the capacity and intelligence of the native peoples should be enlisted in the public service, and that they should be trained in the exercise of political responsibility, first in the management of their local affairs and later in a wider political field.

There is, further, no reason why, within the limits of the policy determined by the Imperial Government, the representatives of the different races should not in the Legislative Council decide questions relating to their common interests by the methods usual to such an assembly. It is only the major issues of economic and educational policy as these bear on the interests of different races that cannot be decided by the vote of a racial majority.

It follows from what has been said that it is necessary in the government of East Africa to discriminate between two classes of questions which must be dealt with by entirely different methods. It is not difficult to distinguish in general terms the two classes of subjects. What is not possible is to give the distinction statutory definition and embody it in a constitution, for the reason that native interests cut across every line of division of subjects. It is by no means necessary that every question involving native interests should be reserved for decision by the Imperial Government; when the main principles of native policy have been laid down the carrying out of the principles can in a large number of matters be left to the local Legislative Council. But any matter affecting native interests *may* involve the principles of imperial policy. Hence a general understanding having been reached as to the classes of questions which are, on the one hand, the responsibility of the Imperial Government and, on the other hand, fall within the province of the local legislative assembly, the interpretation of the understanding, and the decision whether in

any given case principles of imperial policy are involved, must be left to the Imperial Government or its representative. For such an arrangement there is a precedent in India, where the Government of India Act provides that the Governor-General in Council "shall be the sole judge" whether in any particular case the exercise of the powers of superintendence, direction and control over local Governments vested in the Governor-General in Council comes within the specified purposes.

Although, if a central authority responsible to the Imperial Government were set up in Africa, the relations between it and the Governments of the separate territories would present many difficulties, it must be remembered that these difficulties would not be essentially different from those which have had to be met in India. There the reservation to the Government of India of the control of all-India subjects and of powers of supervision and direction over the local Governments has had to be reconciled with the devolution to the local Governments of legislative and executive authority in provincial affairs and with the creation of a field in which aspirations for self-government can find expression. There is no reason why a system should not be evolved in East Africa in which the authority of the Imperial Government to decide a certain class of questions would be combined with a recognized and progressive policy of devolution in other matters.

It is not possible to enter here into the details of a constitution for East Africa. It would involve too long and technical a discussion. It is necessary, however, to indicate in a general way what is meant by an alternative means of deciding questions which cannot be settled by a majority vote in a legislative assembly.

The deciding authority must be the Secretary of State, responsible to the Imperial Parliament. But the Secretary of State does not decide *in vacuo*. Many influences

contribute to his decision. It is by making better provision for the investigation and sifting of the facts and for ensuring that every point of view and every type of experience make their contribution to the decision, that we can advance in the direction indicated by General Smuts, in which science becomes an increasing factor in government. In proportion as the machinery achieves its purpose, every element of arbitrariness is removed from the decision. The end in view is not control by an arbitrary authority, still less government by a bureaucracy, but control by reason and by the facts. Machinery must be created which will ensure, as far as is humanly possible, that the decision has taken full account of all relevant facts and claims, and is recognized consequently to be based on reason and justice.

The machinery must provide, therefore, in the first place, for the contribution of the experience of the local communities. They are the parties most affected by the decision, and they must be satisfied that it has been reached with a full knowledge and understanding of their claims. It is not only in the carrying out of the principles of imperial policy that the local communities must have a part; they must share also in the determination of the principles. The machinery of government must make it possible for them to have such a share. What cannot be conceded to any one community is that in these matters it should be able to impose its will on the others by the vote of a racial majority.

The machinery must provide, secondly, for the contribution not only of local experience, but also of the widest range of knowledge and experience at the disposal of the empire. The proposal that there should be set up in London an Advisory Committee on East Africa has met with disfavour in many quarters. The objection may have been due in part to the fact that the suggestion

has been viewed in the setting of traditional ideas, past experience and the existing machinery of government. If, on the other hand, our eyes are on the future, and we recognize with General Smuts that government must widen its outlook and call to its aid new methods, there appears to be the need for some machinery by which, in the words of Lord Balfour, "the larger problems presented to us by this vast area in East Africa may be more conveniently considered in their entirety." Whether such a body should be a sub-committee of the Committee of Civil Research, so that effect would be given to the programme originally outlined for the Committee by Lord Balfour; or should be composed of members of Parliament; or should be constituted by the appointment of representatives of the various organizations for research and for the promotion of human welfare in Africa that have already been brought into existence, need not be discussed here. But if the problems of economic development and educational policy in Africa are to be envisaged as a whole, some machinery must be created for the purpose. An idea, if it is to be effective, needs to be embodied in an institution. "There is all the difference in the world," as General Smuts has said, "between an institution and a mere declaration of policy."

The machinery must provide, thirdly, for bringing into fruitful relation with one another local experience and the wider knowledge available at the headquarters of the empire. Both are equally necessary for the formulation of a right policy. The lack of machinery adequate for this purpose is one of the chief defects of the existing system. Decisions are taken in East Africa, and the over-riding decisions are taken at a distance of thousands of miles. Because the over-riding decisions have to be taken without the direct contribution of local experience they are lacking in moral authority. The

instinctive recognition of this tends to prevent bold and strong decisions from being taken. The defect might be remedied by the appointment of a High Commissioner, who would divide his time between London and Africa and would be in direct touch with both points of view. He would be the instrument of bringing about a fruitful combination of all the different forms of knowledge and experience that must contribute to a right and wise decision.

In the last resort there must be some one who decides. The deciding authority must be the Secretary of State. He would be influenced by the advice of the High Commissioner, who would be in touch with all the parties concerned. But in neither the one case nor the other would the decision be arbitrary. It would result from the contribution of many types of experience. In proportion to the success achieved in eliciting the facts, it would be a decision imposed by the facts. That to which the parties would be asked to submit would be not the ruling of an arbitrary authority but " the discipline of objective information." Something of this kind would appear to have been in the mind of General Smuts when he spoke of the part which science might play in human government.

The decisions which have to be made in regard to the future of East Africa are momentous. Shall we set up institutions of which the inevitable effect must be to turn the minds of the natives in a political direction and absorb the energies of their leaders in political agitation ? Or shall it be our aim to set up a system which will inspire in their minds confidence in the disinterestedness and impartiality of their rulers, develop their appreciation of the methods of science, and leave them free to devote their main attention to the furtherance of their own welfare and progress ? The latter course is only possible on the condition that the white community renounces

the claim to political domination. White leadership there must be. The experience and capacity of the European community in East Africa can make an immense contribution to the advancement of the country. But a claim to a position of political privilege must inevitably stimulate the political ambitions of the other races. It has created the Indian problem in Kenya. It is bound before long to create a much greater native problem. It must make politics the dominant interest in East Africa. The result would be to make difficult, and perhaps impossible, a disinterested and far-sighted policy of economic development and educational advance with the aid of modern science, which more than anything else would contribute to the general prosperity of the territories and the ultimate advantage of all races.

Our discussion has been concerned in the main with the methods by which the objects of policy can best be achieved. But in the last resort what we make of the contact of Europe with Africa is a question of ends more than of means. Modern science opens up large new possibilities of mastery in the problems with which government has to deal, but the choice of the purposes for which these powers will be used depends on our scale of values. Africa not only provides a boundless field for the exercise of the white man's capacity to tame the forces of nature, to organize, to administer and to conduct bold enterprises; it also forces on him the necessity of re-examining his ultimate convictions about the meaning of life. We have to make up our minds whether we are to regard the peoples of Africa primarily as instruments of our own advantage, or as ends in themselves. Is our belief in the supreme value of persons strong enough to stand the searching tests presented by the contact between stronger and weaker peoples over so large an area?

In the intercourse of white and black in Africa it is not simply a question of what will happen to the African. A question of at least equal importance is what will happen to white civilization. In the inextricable relations in which the two are bound together the white man cannot help receiving as well as giving. The whole of our civilization must feel the effects of contact with a new continent. If through our action or our neglect we allow the peoples of Africa to be debased, they will inevitably drag down with them our standards and ideals. If we can help to raise them, we can rise with them into a world of wider horizons and expanding moral energies, of increasing justice and fair play, compassion and generosity, helpfulness and co-operation. Viewed as a problem of human relations, General Smuts is not far wrong in maintaining that " the question of white and black on the African continent is going to be the most interesting and enthralling problem of the twentieth century."

APPENDIX

GENERAL SMUTS ON CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

No reference has been made in the preceding pages to General Smuts' remarks on the subject of Christian missions. A brief comment on them, however, may be permitted as an appendix.

General Smuts is reported to have said in his Rhodes Lecture :

" The Christian missionary has, after a century of ceaseless effort, not yet succeeded in making any deep impression on Africa. Compared to the enormous progress and still rapid spread of Mohammedanism his success is not very striking."

Having been challenged in regard to these remarks, he included in his lecture on Livingstone the following passage :

" It is difficult to conceive what Africa would have been without the civilizing effects of the Christian missions. Mistakes have been made, but the magnitude of the real service is out of all comparison to those incidental mistakes. Missionary enterprise, with its universal Christian message and its vast educative and civilizing effort, is and remains the greatest and most powerful influence for good in Africa."

It may be left to General Smuts to reconcile the assertion that " the Christian missionary has not yet succeeded in making any deep impression " with the statement that " missionary enterprise is, and remains, the most powerful influence for good in Africa." The explanation which most naturally occurs to missionaries is that the remarks belong to the class of comments, to which they have become well accustomed, made by outside critics, including busy public

men, who have not made any deep or first-hand study of the subject.

As regards the results of missionary work, the Christian Church has been engaged for so many centuries in the task of trying to transform human nature that it is deeply aware of the difficulties and of the intractability of the material, and is consequently little inclined to make extravagant claims in regard to success. Educators and statesmen also have their moments of disappointment and discouragement. A radical change is not effected in human nature by affixing a label, as critics of missionary work seem sometimes to suppose. This much may, however, be said without fear of contradiction—that throughout nearly the whole of Africa, at least nine-tenths of the education which the African has received he has had from Christian missions; that some of the most successful and progressive educational work in the continent to-day is being done in government schools by missionaries, borrowed by government for the task, as well as in missionary institutions; that portions of the Bible, which at the lowest is the finest literature in the world, have been translated into two hundred and forty-three African languages; and that there are not a few African Christians whom the Church may be proud to include among its members. If nobility of character is worthy of reverence, there are Christian Africans to whom the writer and other white men would wish to take off their hats.

The other charge brought by General Smuts against missionaries is that they have helped towards the disintegration of native society by their undiscriminating attack on native religious ideas. The earlier missionary efforts, he contends, were made without knowledge of native psychology or of the teachings of anthropology. The charge is partly true. Missionaries, like all other white men, have made many mistakes in dealing with Africans. Moreover there are missionaries and missionaries, just as there are officials and officials, and settlers and settlers, and generalizations are consequently unsafe. Missionaries may not have known as much of native psychology as they ought to have done, but they have known a great deal more than most Europeans.

Language is the key to the mind, and the production of literature in nearly two hundred and fifty of the languages of Africa, and of dictionaries and grammars in many of them, has been almost entirely the work of missionaries. The greater part of our knowledge of African beliefs and customs is likewise due to them.

The international missionary conference held at le Zoute in Belgium in 1926, which included representatives of the principal non-Roman Catholic British, American and Continental missionary societies working in Africa, recommended that all missionary societies should " provide full opportunity and time to African missionaries to study native languages, customs and religions." The plans for the formation of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, which unites the learned societies interested in African studies throughout the world, and is supported by most of the governments in Africa, took shape at a missionary conference held two years earlier at High Leigh, and the missionary societies, Protestant and Roman Catholic, contribute to the financial support of the Institute. It cannot be maintained, therefore, that the missionary body as a whole is not alive to the importance of understanding African mentality and African institutions.

THE END.

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